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POLICY #001

KALAMAZOO PUBLIC LIBRARY

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

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Mission Statement

The Kalamazoo Public Library provides open access to opportunities which anticipate, support and respond to the informational, cultural, and leisure needs of people within the Library District.

INTRODUCTION

The Kalamazoo Public Library Board of Trustees delegates the selection of library materials to the Kalamazoo Public Library Director and to members of the professional staff.

The MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY of Kalamazoo Public Library guides the professional staff responsible for selection activity and documents selection principles for Kalamazoo Public Library District residents.

Basic to the Policy are the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement. These statements are interpreted to pertain to all formats in which information is to be found, including audio and electronic resources. The statements are appended to this document.

The library assures open access to its holdings for all patrons. The Board of Trustees recognizes that while individuals are free to reject for themselves materials of which they do not approve, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to read, listen, and view within any guideline set forth by the library, such as the Internet Use Policy.

OBJECTIVES OF MATERIALS SELECTION

The primary objective of selection is to provide access to materials of contemporary significance and permanent value. However, the library provides some materials for

recreation and entertainment that may not be of enduring interest or value. The library attends to the community's present and future needs as it adds materials to enrich the collections and maintain overall balance.

Kalamazoo Public Library builds collections and selects resources which:

- anticipate, support and respond to the diverse informational, cultural and leisure needs of community residents of all ages;
- encourage lifelong learning and intellectual growth;
- stimulate informed participation in the affairs of contemporary society;
- support civic, cultural, and educational activities within the community;
- give access to a variety of viewpoints on matters of current interest;
- reflect minority opinions as well as those of the majority.

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR MATERIALS SELECTION

Each resource must be considered for its usefulness, its format and the audience for which it is intended. No single criterion is applicable to all purchase and access decisions. Some resources may be judged primarily for their artistic merit, scholarship or value to humanity; others are chosen to satisfy the informational, recreational or educational interests of the community.

Librarians apply their judgment and experience in selecting materials according to the criteria listed below. All criteria do not apply to each item. Works of imagination are judged by different standards than are works of information and opinion. Works that present an aspect of life honestly are not necessarily excluded because of frankness of expression. Materials are judged as a whole rather than on isolated portions. In considering individual titles in the selection process, librarians consult reviews, bibliographies and other evaluative sources. However, the library generally purchases best sellers, giving higher priority to demand than to reviews or other relevant criteria. The criteria include:

- suitability of physical form for library use;
- suitability of subject and style for intended audience;
- present and potential relevance to local interests and needs;

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- appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content;
- number and nature of requests from the library district public;
- historical significance;
- usefulness to patrons with special needs;
- importance as a document of the times;
- relation to existing collection, alternative formats and other material on the subject;
- reputation and/or significance of the author/artist and publisher/producer;
- authority, competence, integrity and purpose of the author/artist/publisher;
- attention of critics, reviewers and the public;
- comprehensiveness and depth of treatment;
- clarity, accuracy, logic of presentation and/or ease of use
- representation of a minority point of view;
- relevance to the experiences and contributions of diverse populations;
- artistic presentation and experimentation;
- quality of illustrations;
- originality, vitality, readability or ability to sustain interest;
- effective characterization;
- authenticity of historical or social setting;
- value of resource in relation to its cost.
- lack of availability or easy access elsewhere.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Electronic resources, including free worldwide web connections, web picks, and electronic databases, provide opportunities to expand the scope of information available to users. Providing connections to global information, services and networks is not the same as selecting and purchasing material for a library collection. Determining the accuracy or authenticity of electronic information may present unique challenges.

Some information accessed electronically through the **free worldwide web connection** may not meet the library's selection policy. The provision of access does not imply sponsorship or endorsement by the library. Furthermore, the library's Internet Use Policy establishes guidelines for access. Parents and legal guardians who are concerned about their children's use of the Internet should provide guidance to their children.

The library provides access to selected Internet sources through its **web picks** based on informational, educational and recreational needs for patron usage and staff needs in answering patron questions. Internet sites are selected based on quality, relevance, currency, comprehensiveness and accuracy of the information; ease of access, interface and navigability; and have identifiable content authority attributed to an individual or organization. Commercialized sites must include informative and accurate information, not just for product promotion.

The General Criteria for Selection of Materials in traditional formats apply to the selection of **electronic databases** as well. However, because electronic formats require non-traditional means of acquisition, storage and access, some additional criteria must be considered:

- ease of navigation and training requirements;
- ease of access and number of access points;
- hardware and software requirements, including maintenance;
- vendor support and reasonable contractual requirements;
- comparison of cost and content with other formats available;
- vendor delivery of timely updates and retention of historical data, if promised;
- networking capabilities;

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- availability of remote access;
- ownership of product: purchase or lease.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MATERIALS SELECTION

CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

The children's collection provides materials which anticipate the diverse needs, interest, tastes, and backgrounds of girls and boys from birth through sixth grade. These materials should provide enjoyment for children, inspire and cultivate in them a love of books and reading, stimulate their creative powers and appreciation of beauty, encourage them to develop their mental capacities, meet their personal informational needs, and help them recognize a broad spectrum of moral and social values. Additional appropriate materials are provided to help adults understand and work with children.

The library does not limit children to use of the children's collection. Therefore, a child's parent or guardian, not the library, must be responsible for the materials chosen by the child.

LOCAL HISTORY/COMMUNITY INFORMATION

The library makes a commitment to provide information for its patrons about the community and the state. It selectively acquires and provides access to relevant resources about Kalamazoo city and county, the southwest Michigan region, and the state in general. The library also provides basic historical and genealogical material about the areas from which Kalamazoo was predominantly settled.

Especially in regard to works by local authors, materials in the local history collection may or may not meet selection criteria in other respects, the local interest taking precedence over other factors.

Since "local history" is a discipline as well as a place, the library acquires instructional materials in the effective use of local history sources. To aid patrons who have interests in other communities, the library provides materials to help them identify and contact institutions that house materials appropriate to their needs.

Since local information is not always available commercially, it is necessary to develop indexes and other tools in-house. Both current and historic entries are added to the library's Community Information Database to fill local needs, interests, and demand.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

The library acts as a depository of documents for a variety of governmental levels: federal, state, regional and local. Federal documents are primarily acquired from the United States Government Printing Office on a selective basis through the Federal Depository Library System and must adhere to the acquisition and retention requirements of chapter 19 of Title 44 of the U.S. Code, and as prescribed by the Michigan Plan for the FDLP. Michigan documents are acquired under provisions of Michigan Compiled Laws 397.20. Effort is made to adhere to prescribed handling methods for all document levels and to make documents available to all patrons and assist in their use, if needed.

In addition, non-depository documents and resource materials are selected to enhance the library's non-document collection and to facilitate use of the various document collections. Regular efforts will be made to increase bibliographic and inventory control, and to assess the needs of the library in relationship to the changing demographics of the area and the collections of neighboring depository collections, especially Western Michigan University.

PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS

In order to serve a diverse population, the library provides a wide range of reference and recreational interest periodicals and newspapers. Emphasis is given to titles included in periodical indexes or published locally. Specialized titles are considered in relation to subject need, cost and availability in area libraries.

LOCAL INTEREST

Some materials evaluated are subject to widespread local demand, and such items may or may not meet the selection criteria outlined in this policy. While the volume and nature of requests by members of the public are influential factors, the library makes the final selection and retention decisions.

In accordance with established procedures, the library makes available systems through which patrons can make purchase recommendations or voice objections to library materials. However, inordinate responsiveness to any individual or group is not the library's practice. As the social and intellectual climate of the community changes, materials not purchased earlier may generate interest. Such items are re-evaluated on a continuing basis.

GIFTS

A gift to the library may consist of materials or funds for the purchase of materials. The library accepts restricted gifts funds only if the material to be purchased has been jointly

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approved by the donor and the library. Gift additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchase materials and are accepted subject to the following limitations:

- The library retains full ownership of the gift.
- The library makes the final decision on its own use or other disposition of the gift.
- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, access, and retention.

WITHDRAWAL AND REPLACEMENT

The library regularly withdraws outdated materials, items no longer of interest or in demand, unused duplicates, worn or mutilated copies, and selected periodicals, newspapers and serials for which there is insufficient space to house older issues. This procedure is an integral facet of collection development that ensures that the collections are up-to-date and in good physical condition. The library makes replacement decisions based on specific selection criteria and does not necessarily replace all lost, damaged, worn or obsolete items.

Except for the transfer of discarded materials to other library collections or to the Friends of the Kalamazoo Public Library for their store, the library does not give or sell materials from its collections to individuals or organizations without the express permission of the Library Director.

BINDING OF MATERIALS

The library routinely selects books and periodicals for binding either because of their physical condition or their long-term value to the collection. This procedure applies also to materials in the library's federal and state depository collection.

CONCLUSION

The library acquires and provides access to new resources and formats as they are judged feasible, suitable, and relevant to the community. Expanding areas of knowledge, technological advances, changing social values, and cultural differences require flexibility, open-mindedness, and responsiveness in the evaluation and re-evaluation of all library resources.

This revised MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY, as adopted by the District Library Board, will be reviewed by the Library Director, professional staff, and the Board of Trustees at least every five years.